



Social Media Policy

Revised 09/2020

Anderson University uses social media as a communication tool to reinforce institutional messaging, to disseminate information, and create opportunities for community engagement. We promote the university, mission, values, and share relevant information to grow our community and increase our support from the AU community such as students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, and friends of the university.

AU recognizes social media as an important communication tool. It is a great way for schools, departments, and offices to develop relationships with key stakeholders, as well as interact with our AU fan base. Because each social media platform has its own unique audience and purpose, we must work proactively to ensure that they are used correctly and maintained properly in order to gain the most impact and protect our AU brand.

Authorized Users

Faculty and staff who have been given the authority to open an AU affiliated social media account, must maintain the account on behalf of their designated department or organization within the university. All university guidelines must be followed.

The Office of Marketing and Communication will maintain a master list of social media accounts, logins, and passwords on behalf of administrative leadership. It is the responsibility of the current authorized user to provide login information to the Office of Marketing and Communication and to notify the office of password changes as well as user changes. Any university affiliated social media accounts that are not performing at prescribed standards will be evaluated and may require a meeting to discuss challenges and opportunities and may be deleted. All affiliate accounts that are created without prior authorization will be evaluated for deletion.

Legal Policy Considerations

All official university social media sites must respect the legal requirements applicable to online communication, Anderson University policies, copyright law, and intellectual property rights, as well as state and federal laws and regulations.

- Abide by [FERPA](#), [NCAA regulations](#), [HIPAA](#), and other applicable privacy laws.
- Follow the terms of service for each social media platform.
- All university affiliated social media accounts are the property of Anderson University and should not be created without prior authorization from the Office of Marketing & Communication.
- Comply with the institution's 501c(3) non-profit status with regard to political activity.

Reminder

Carefully read these guidelines and ensure your postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar



inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Anderson University prohibits taking negative action against any associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any associate who retaliates against another associate for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment we provide, unless it is work-related as authorized by your manager or consistent with the Company Equipment Policy. Do not use Anderson University work email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Anderson University Social Media Accounts

Social media platforms continue to evolve and grow. If you would like to seek authorization to create an account on a platform, please submit a [Social Media Consult](#) request in Raven Solutions.

Social Media Platforms

A properly executed social media strategy can expand your reach, improve search rankings, support the university website, and build a community by drawing in more followers. This kind of success starts by choosing a platform that best reaches your target audience. Social media sites are currently among the most frequently visited websites. Popular social platforms include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, Twitch, TikTok, Reddit, and more. Just because a social platform is trending in the United States, doesn't mean it is a relevant communication tool for the university. For instance, the university is intentionally and strategically not maintaining a social presence on Pinterest or Reddit, so that we can focus our resources on other platforms that are a better fit for the institution and types of conversations we want to engage in with university stakeholders.

Mobile Campus App

The university has a mobile application to foster student engagement. Instead of searching across websites, social media, and flyers, we've created a central place for current students to access relevant information — their phone. It includes tools such as campus calendars, helpful links, a feed wall, groups, event check-in, and helpful notifications. The feed is the most popular feature of Anderson University's app, which functions as a typical social media platform. The feed allows users to share ideas, communicate news, promote events, buy and sell, list housing opportunities, list lost and found items, connect for riding sharing, list praise and prayer requests, and more.

Social Media Etiquette

These preferred protocols foster communication and promotion that reflect best on Anderson University.

- Provide a positive experience for your followers.



- Respond in a timely manner to comments and inbox messages. Set up notifications so you don't miss comments or tags. Don't miss an opportunity to interact with your followers.
- Choose content that is important to your audience and is most likely to catch their attention.
- Write in a professional yet conversational tone. Create a sense of belonging and enjoyment.
- Create connections with your followers by encouraging them to interact with posts.
- Think of social media as a team sport.
 - Remember that when you are representing a university account (i.e. athletic teams, social clubs, academic department, etc.), you must use neutral pronouns. Posting things such as "I am so excited for homecoming" will confuse your followers. You are speaking as the university, not as an individual.
 - When possible, link your posts to relevant departmental or university web pages. This is an easy way for other university accounts to gain followers.
 - Cross-promote social media sites within your department, with the university, and within your field of expertise. Your posts are more likely to be reshared and seen by a bigger audience.
 - Use and share university promoted #hashtags.
 - When appropriate, encourage your followers to re-share posts. This will expand your reach to potential followers.
- Monitor yourself as well as your followers.
 - Be aware of spelling and grammar, while also following our [AU Style Guide](#).
 - Be sure that information you are posting is factual and has been verified.
 - When corrections are necessary, communicate updated information in a clear manner.
 - Allow disagreements that are within reason and allow individuals the right to express their opinion even if it is negative
 - Rarely hide or remove content, and only when it crosses the line from criticism to intentional malice or harm towards a person or entity. Potential reasons to hide or remove content includes: vulgar language, name-calling, bullying, spam content (links to websites), factually incorrect information regarding the university, or threats. Contact Marketing and Communication if you need guidance or are experiencing a social media crisis of this nature.
 - Respect university time and resources. Use good judgment in your use of social media during work hours and on university equipment.
 - Schedule periodic reviews of your site's performance. Most platforms offer built-in analytics tools that provide very insightful information about your platform's growth and level of interaction.



- If you find that your social media account is not meeting your expectations or the needs of your audience, it is best to close the account rather than leave it inactive. Notify Marketing and Communication of your decision.

Planning Guide

Launching a social media platform can be time well spent or lots of time wasted. Here are three initial considerations, and the Office of Marketing and Communication can help provide more [comprehensive guidelines](#) for social media development at the time of consultation.

| Plan | What to Expect | Why |
|---|--|--|
| Request a Social Media Consult in Raven Solutions. | Someone from Marketing & Communication will schedule a time to meet with you. | We will discuss your goals, strategy, and audience and can offer tips to help you be successful. |
| Assign a staff or faculty member to be the administrator/manager of the platform. | This person is responsible for maintaining the site, safeguarding passwords, and sharing password changes with Marketing and Communication, and representing AU with integrity. | Students can help with social media sites but should not be assigned as an administrator or manager of the site. This helps to ensure that we don't lose access after students graduate. |
| Create a social media calendar for the content you plan to post. | You need to commit to about three posts every week all year long. In addition, plan for time to gather information, research topics, find engaging media (photos, video, links), and continuously respond to comments and interact with followers. | If you create the calendar and realize you cannot make the year-round time commitment or find that you don't have enough content to post a few times each week, then making requests to MarComm to promote your news on our institutional social media platforms might be a better option. |

Other Communication Tools

If you find that you cannot make the time and resource commitment for traditional social media, AU offers other communication tools that might be a better fit.

- If you want to reach an internal audience or member group such as current students, parents of current students, faculty, staff or alumni, consider setting up a private or invitation-only group page in one of the social media platforms. Groups are a lot less work and often work just as well as traditional social media.
- Submit your information for consideration on our institutional social media sites.



- Share information or opportunities for students on the mobile app.
- Make a request to have your information added to our Weekly Update email or Campus Calendar.